



NEWS RELEASE

Contacts:

Walt Lender, Lake George Association, (518)-668-3558

Peter Bauer, FUND for Lake George, (518) 668-9700 x304

Nancy Williams, Lake George Land Conservancy, (518) 644-9673

Final Engineering Design for West Brook Project Completed

This stormwater treatment system will be located on the south parcel of the former Gaslight Village, where the Charley's Saloon building stands

LAKE GEORGE, NY – (May 13, 2010) -- The environmental partners working on the West Brook Conservation Initiative have released the final engineering design for the new stormwater treatment complex to be built on the south parcel of the former Gaslight Village in Lake George. A color rendering depicts restored wetlands and the environmental park that will be built on 4.9 acres south of West Brook Road as part of the collaborative West Brook Conservation Initiative (WBCI).

Located on the former Gaslight Village property, the entire 12-acre WBCI project represents one of the most important conservation efforts in Lake George's history. Three environmental groups -- the Lake George Association, the FUND for Lake George and the Lake George Land Conservancy -- have worked together to develop the project under the terms of a conservation easement they jointly hold with three municipal partners: the town and the village of Lake George, and Warren County.

Designed by the Chazen Companies, the plan for the south parcel of the property will restore wetlands to naturally slow stormwater generated from the Route 9 corridor and adjoining properties, capture sediment and filter pollutants. Project engineers estimate that 90% of the sediment will be successfully treated by this system and over one-half of the nutrients will be removed. The wetland systems also provide an open environmental park, with interpretative signage, nature trails, elevated walkways, a pavilion, an outdoor classroom, gazebo, overlooks and picnic areas for the general public.

-- more --



"This project will capture and treat millions of gallons of stormwater that annually flow into the lake untreated," said Peter Bauer, executive director of the FUND for Lake George.

All aspects of the project have been carefully designed to require minimal or no maintenance. Drought resistant meadow-like grasses will require no mowing, watering or fertilizing. Minimal mowing may be necessary in selected areas close to West Brook Road for aesthetic purposes. The lawn seed is a mix of fescues that will produce a low-growing and drought-tolerant grass. New native plants, shrubs and trees will require little or no weeding, pruning or fertilizing. Periodically – after a few years of maturity – the wetland plantings will need to be thinned and excess plant materials removed.

The existing buildings on this portion of the property will be removed through a state grant already under contract.

Due to the filling of historic wetlands, channeling of the stream, and development in the stream's watershed, West Brook today is the single largest source of contaminants -- pollution, nutrients and sediment -- entering the south basin of Lake George. The delta at the mouth of the brook has grown to over 7,000 square meters. The WBCI will help to fix this major source of pollution to Lake George.

The project features include a settling pond to trap and retain sediment, a shallow marsh where wetland plantings will store and treat run-off, and a gravel wetland where dense root mats, crushed stone and a microbe rich environment will improve the water quality before it is conveyed to West Brook. Engineers agree that the best way to treat stormwater is through natural processes of wetlands, where water is captured and retained for a period of time. This allows sediment and nutrients to be dropped out as the water is cleansed.

Significant state and federal funding has been acquired to complete the construction of the project, but monies still need to be raised from private individuals and corporations to pay for the land. The purchase of these lands by the environmental groups facilitated this entire project. In addition to the \$2.1 million loan on the Gaslight Village purchase by the LGA and the FUND, the Lake George Land Conservancy is carrying a \$2.7 million loan on the 1,400-acre Berry Pond tract, which protects the upland watershed for West Brook.

"The bold visions and big gifts of past generations have made Lake George what it is today," said Nancy Williams, executive director of the Lake George Land Conservancy. "It's the lake saving project of a lifetime; we simply cannot fail to protect our region's greatest economic and environmental asset," Peter Bauer said.

"In all of our 125 year history, the West Brook Conservation Initiative is the Lake George Association's largest, most important water quality remediation effort," said Walt Lender, executive director of the LGA. "The early members of the LGA, 125 years ago, were people who saw possibilities, and made tough choices and major financial commitments. We need the commitment of today's visionaries. We need the supporters of the LGA, the Fund for Lake George and the Lake George Land Conservancy – as well as those who love and depend economically upon the Lake – to support this project which will ensure a clean and healthy Lake George for generations to come."